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DRAFTED BY EA:PCHABIB
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S:LSEAGLEBURGER(SUBSTANCE)
S/S - MR. GAMMON

File China

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO USLO PEKING

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CHEROKEE

E.O. 11652:
TAGS: PFOR, CH
SUBJECT: CONTACT WITH PRCL0

1. ON THE SECRETARY'S INSTRUCTIONS HABIB CONVEYED A MESSAGE TO PRCL0 DEC. 24. THE TEXT, WHICH WAS READ TO PRCL0 ACTING CHIEF HAN HSU, IS AS FOLLOWS. BEGIN TEXT.

2. THE SECRETARY HAS ASKED ME TO CONVEY THE FOLLOWING: THE UNITED STATES AND CHINESE SIDES RECONFIRMED DURING THE SECRETARY'S RECENT VISIT TO THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA THAT OUR BILATERAL RELATIONSHIP CONTINUES ON COURSE AND HAS NOT COOLED. THIS IS CERTAINLY THE DESIRE OF THE UNITED STATES WHICH CONSIDERS A CLOSE RELATIONSHIP WITH THE PRC A KEY ELEMENT OF ITS FOREIGN POLICY. THE BASIC STRATEGY FOR ACHIEVING NORMALIZATION OF RELATIONS REMAINS SOUND.

AT THE SAME TIME, WE HAVE RECEIVED REPORTS OF DISCUSSIONS WITH THE PRESS THAT APPEAR AT VARIANCE WITH THESE JUDGMENTS. CERTAIN CIRCUMSTANCES SURROUNDING THE SECRETARY'S VISIT TO CHINA HAVE ADDED TO THIS PROBLEM. THESE DEVELOPMENTS

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HAVE RESULTED IN SOME COMMENTARY AND SPECULATION IN THE MEDIA THAT COULD CONFUSE PUBLIC UNDERSTANDING OF THE PROCESS OF OUR RELATIONS. TO CARRY OUT COMMON UNDERSTANDINGS NOT ONLY THE SUBSTANCE BUT THE APPEARANCE IS IMPORTANT.

AS THE CHINESE SHOULD BE AWARE FROM RECENT DISCUSSIONS, THE APPEARANCE OF PRESSURES COMPLICATES THE PROCESS OF ENSURING PUBLIC SUPPORT FOR WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE. THERE WAS MUTUAL UNDERSTANDING IN PEKING THAT PRESIDENT FORD'S VISIT WAS AGREED WITHOUT CONDITION, AND WE BELIEVE THAT THIS IS THE NECESSARY CLIMATE TO CARRY ON THE PROCESS OF NORMALIZATION. WE DO NOT BELIEVE IT IS IN EITHER SIDE'S INTEREST TO CREATE THE IMPRESSION OF DISSATISFACTION WITH THE ONGOING PROCESS. MOREOVER, THIS IS MISLEADING WITH RESPECT TO OUR OVERALL OBJECTIVES.

WE WERE ALSO SURPRISED BY STATEMENTS MADE TO SENATOR MANSFIELD QUESTIONING WHETHER THE SECRETARY HAD PROVIDED THE CHINESE WITH A FULL BRIEFING CONCERNING AGREEMENT REACHED WITH THE SOVIET UNION AT VLADIVOSTOK. YOUR GOVERNMENT HAS ALWAYS BEEN ABLE TO COUNT ON THE SECRETARY'S WORD IN THE PAST AND IT CAN CONTINUE TO DO SO.

WE OFFER THESE COMMENTS IN A SPIRIT OF CANDOR AND A CONSTRUCTIVE EFFORT TO PROCEED WITH NORMALIZATION WHICH WE REMAIN FIRMLY DETERMINED TO PURSUE. IN THIS CONNECTION, THE SECRETARY HAS ALSO ASKED ME TO ENQUIRE WHETHER IT MIGHT BE POSSIBLE FOR FOREIGN MINISTER CHIAO KUAN-HUA TO VISIT WASHINGTON, PERHAPS IN THE SPRING, OR IF THIS SHOULD BE INCONVENIENT, TO COME TO SOME OTHER POINT IN THE UNITED STATES FOR A MEETING WITH THE SECRETARY TO DISCUSS PREPARATIONS FOR PRESIDENT FORD'S TRIP TO PEKING. SUCH A VISIT COULD HELP TO SET THE FRAMEWORK FOR THE PRESIDENT'S VISIT. MEETING IN THE UNITED STATES WITH THE FOREIGN MINISTER WOULD BE A PARTICULARLY EFFECTIVE WAY OF COUNTERING THOSE WHO WISH TO SUGGEST THAT THERE ARE SERIOUS DIFFICULTIES IN OUR EVOLVING RELATIONSHIP. END TEXT.

3. AFTER HE HAD LISTENED TO IT, HAN HSU RAISED A NUMBER OF QUESTIONS CONCERNING THE SOURCES AND CITATIONS OF PARTICULAR NEWSPAPER REPORTS SO THAT HE COULD EXAMINE THE

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EVIDENCE. HABIB SAID WE DID NOT WANT TO POINT THE FINGER AT ANY PARTICULAR STORY, BUT THAT THERE APPEARED TO BE A PATTERN IN WHICH CHINESE OFFICIALS ARE CITED AS BEING DISSATISFIED WITH THE COURSE OF US-PRC RELATIONS. HABIB STRESSED THE IMPORTANCE OF APPEARANCES AS WELL AS SUBSTANCE. HAN STRONGLY IMPLIED THAT THE NEWSMEN WHO WROTE THE STORIES MAY HAVE HAD NO PRC SOURCES AT ALL. HABIB DID NOT THINK IT DESIRABLE TO CITE ANY PARTICULAR STORY AND THERE BY GET INVOLVED IN SPECIFICS. THERE IS NO DOUBT THAT HAN UNDERSTANDS THE PROBLEM, DESPITE HIS QUESTIONING ONLY ONE ASPECT OF IT, AND WILL REPORT

VERBATIM WHAT WAS SAID. ON THE INVITATION TO CHIAO, HAN MERELY TOOK NOTE AND SAID HE WOULD REPORT. MAW

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